THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (c) Ordering was withheld due to detection of use of mild steel in place of specified corten steel in manufacturing of wagons by several manufacturing units which necessitated the comprehensive checks on all the wagon manufacturers in order to assess the quantum and magnitude of the problems. Wagon orders have been released on 5-10-2001 on various Wagon Builders by taking suitable undertaking and after taking legal opinion in the matter. Delay in placement of order was primarily due to quality problems noticed in manufacturing of wagons.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) to (c) above.

Task Force on Sanitation in the Railways

† 2079. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to constitute a three-tier task force for sanitation in the railways;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any action in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (c) there is no proposal to constitute a three tier task force on cleanliness on Indian Railways. However, multi-disciplinary Service Improvement Groups (SIGs) are functioning at the three tier levels vis. station, division and zonal railway levels to monitor the upkeep and maintenance of various passenger amenities including cleanliness. Cleanliness being a continuous process, all endeavours are made by the railways to improve the standard of cleanliness in railway premises and on trains. The various steps taken include strengthening of monitoring and supervision system besides introduction of 'Pay & Use' scheme of toilets, emphasis on mechanised cleaning processes, provision of washable aprons & additional dustbins, regular removal of garbage, spraying of insecticides, repairs to drains, montly intensive cleaning of coaches, deployment of travelling safaiwalas on selected trains and education of public through various media. A fillip has been given by launching special drives- involving senior officers.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.